Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 01207 01 OF 02 201752Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
TRSE-00 /058 W
----------201810Z 117928 /47
R 201736Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4901
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 01207

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, GW
SUBJECT: BIEDENKOPF TO GIVE UP POSITION AS CDU
SECRETARY GENERAL

BEGIN SUMMARY: ON JANUARY 19 KURT BIEDENKOPF AND CDU CHAIRMAN HELMUT KOHL ANNOUNCED THAT BIEDENKOPF WOULD NOT BE A CANDIDATE FOR RE-ELECTION TO THE POST OF CDU SECRETARY GENERAL AT THE MARCH CDU NATIONAL CONVENTION. ALTHOUGH BOTH MEN DENIED ANY DIFFICULTIES BETWEEN THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND THE CDU CHAIRMAN, CLEARLY THEIR RELATIONSHIP HAS SOURED IN RECENT YEARS. KOHL BELIEVES
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 01207 01 OF 02 201752Z

BIEDENKOPF IS TOO AMBITIOUS AND PLANS EVENTUALLY TO UNSEAT HIM AS LEADER OF THE CDU.

A FEW WEEKS AGO KOHL OFFERED THE CHOICE TO BIEDENKOPF EITHER TO CONCENTRATE ON HIS POLITICAL CAREER OR TO DEVOTE HIMSELF TO THE POST OF SECRETARY GENERAL FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS. ON JANUARY 18 BIEDENKOPF WAS ELECTED

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

TO THE EXPANDED VORSTAND OF THE CDU/CSU FRAKTION AND KOHL NAMED HIM FRAKTION ECONOMIC SPOKESMAN. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF HE WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE HIS MARK IN THE ROUGH AND TUMBLE WORLD OF FRAKTION POLITICS. KOHL HOPES TO NAME FORMER RHINELAND-PALATINATE SOCIAL MINISTER GEISSLER TO BE THE NEW SECRETARY GENERAL. END OF SUMMARY.

1. THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT PROFESSOR KURT BIEDENKOPF WOULD NOT BE A CANDIDATE FOR RE-ELECTION AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CDU CAME AS THE RESULT OF INCREASING DIFFICULTIES BETWEEN BIEDENKOPF AND CDU CHAIRMAN KOHL. IT IS DIFFICULT TO MARK PRECISELY THE MOMENT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO MEN STARTED, BUT OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS THE RELATIONSHIP HAS DETERIORATED FROM FRIENDSHIP TO ACUTE DISLIKE.

2. KOHL HAD CHOSEN BIEDENKOPF TO BE SECRETARY GENERAL FOUR YEARS AGO, AND FOR SOME TIME HE WAS EXTREMELY HAPPY WITH HIS CHOICE. BIEDENKOPF BROUGHT NEW LIFE INTO THE PARTY ORGANIZATION, WAS SUCCESSFUL IN STREAM-LINING THE PARTY, AND INCREASED MEMBERSHIP TO ALMOST ONE MILLION. AN EXTREMELY ARTICULATE MAN, BOTH IN GERMAN AND IN ENGLISH, THE YOUNG PROFESSOR HAD A FLAIR FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS AND AT TIMES UPSTAGED HIS BOSS. AS ONE COMMENTATOR PUT IT, KOHL WANTED HIM TO BE A SECRETARY, BUT BIEDENKOPF WANTED TO BE A GENERAL.

3. ACTUALLY THE DIFFERENCES GO BEYOND A DISPUTE ABOUT CONFIDENTIAL

THE APPROPRIATE ROLE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL. BIEDENKOPF'S WILLINGNESS (SOME WOULD SAY DELIGHT) AT IRRITATING STRAUSS AND THE CSU MADE THINGS DIFFICULT FOR KOHL. WHEN THE CDU CHAIRMAN FLEW BACK FROM HIS MOSCOW TRIP, WHERE HE HAD TO DEFEND STRAUSS AGAINST SOVIET CRITICISM, HE RETURNED TO A RAGING CONTROVERSY BETWEEN STRAUSS AND BIEDENKOPF CAUSED BY AN INTERVIEW THE LATTER HAD GIVEN IN "DER SPIEGEL." THIS DISPUTE HAS CONTINUED EVER SINCE AND DURING THE LATEST DIFFICULTIES OVER THE SPLITTING UP OF THE CDU/CSU FRAKTION, BIEDENKOPF CONSISTENTLY TRIED TO PUSH KOHL RATHER THAN HE WANTED TO GO IN CONFRONTING STRAUSS.

4. KOHL, A MAN WITH A VERY CONSERVATIVE LIFE STYLE, WAS ALSO OFFENDED BY BIEDENKOPF'S PRIVATE LIFE. HE FELT THAT BIEDENKOPF NEGLECTED HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN AND THE LATEST REPORT THAT BIEDENKOFF'S WIFE WAS ABOUT TO SUE HIM FOR A DIVORCE MADE THINGS WORSE.

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

5. KOHL ALSO HAD SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT BIEDENKOPF'S LOYALTY. KOHL BELIEVES BIEDENKOPF IS EXTREMELY AMBITIOUS AND THAT ONE DAY BIEDENKOPF WILL ATTEMPT TO UNSEAT HIM AS PARTY LEADER. SOME TIME IN DECEMBER KOHL TOLD BIEDENKOPF HE WOULD HAVE TO MAKE A CHOICE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 01207 02 OF 02 201746Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
TRSE-00 /058 W
----------201809Z 117886 /47
R 201736Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4902
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 01207

BETWEEN BEING FULL-TIME SECRETARY GENERAL AND DEVELOPING AN INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ROLE IN THE BUNDESTAG. BIEDENKOPF OPTED FOR THE LATTER, AND KOHL RECOMMENDED HIM FOR THE VORSTAND OF THE FRAKTION. HE ALSO CHOSE HIM TO BE THE FRAKTION'S ECONOMIC SPOKESMAN. IRONICALLY THIS WILL ONCE AGAIN PIT BIEDENKOPF AGAINST RAINER BARZEL WHOM HE UNSEATED FOR THE NUMBER ONE SPOT ON THE NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA LAND LIST IN THE 1976

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

BUNDESTAG ELECTION. AS CONSOLATION PRIZE FOR NOT
GETTING INTO THE FRAKTION LEADERSHIP, BARZEL WAS CHOSEN
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AS CHAIRMAN OF THE BUNDESTAG ECONOMICS COMMITTEE. IT
IS ALSO LIKELY THAT BIEDENKOPF WILL SEEK TO BECOME THE
CDU MINISTER-PRESIDENT CANDIDATE IN THE 1980 ELECTIONS
IN NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA.

6. BIEDENKOPF'S BRILLIANCE AND ELOQUENCE ARE MORE
THAN DEMONSTRATED BY HIS CAREER. HE WAS THE YOUNGEST
UNIVERSITY RECTOR IN GERMANY, THE YOUNGEST MAJOR
INDUSTRY DIRECTOR AND THE YOUNGEST CDU SECRETARY GENERAL.
SOME CRITICS FEEL THAT THIS PROVES BIEDENKOPF'S GOOD
SENSE OF TIMING -- THAT IS, THE ABILITY TO LEAVE A JOB
WHILE AT THE PEAK -- RATHER THAN HIS STAYING POWER.
HE HAS LOTS OF ENEMIES IN THE CDU/CSU FRAKTION AS WAS
DEMONSTRATED BY HIS NARROW ELECTION TO THE FRAKTION
VORSTAND. HIS POLITICAL ABILITIES WHICH STILL REMAIN
UNPROVEN WILL BE SORELY TESTED.
STOESSEL

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECRETARY GENERAL, POLITICAL PARTIES, PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS, PARTY MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 20-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BONN01207
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770021-1127
Format: TEL
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770134/aaaabdpy.tel
Line Count: 195
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: bbf607d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3551842
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BIEDENKOPF TO GIVE UP POSITION AS CDU SECRETARY GENERAL BEGIN SUMMARY: ON JANUARY 19 KURT BIEDENKOPF AND
TAGS: PINT, GE, CDU, (KOHL, HELMUT), (BIEDENKOPF, KURT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/bbf607d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009